

 shôjo

BASARA



Story and Art by **Yumi Tamura**

Vol. 1 1



shōjo

BASARA™

Vol. 11

Story and Art by
Yumi Tamura

Basara

Vol. #11

Shôjo Edition

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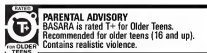
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In the early 21st century, an apocalypse turned fertile lands into deserts and brought human civilization to its knees. Control of Japan passed into the hands of tyrannical kings. three hundred years later, a new hope was born.

At the birth of a rebel chieftain's twins, the blind prophet Nagi predicted, "This is a child of destiny, one who will grow to lead the people and be the light in the sky of our nation's future." The people of Byakko Village placed their hopes in Tatara, their Chief's son, raising him as the "Boy of Destiny."

With the tyrannical Ukon XV ruling Japan through his ruthless sons, a better tomorrow can only be achieved through strife and bloodshed. When the "Boy of Destiny" is killed by the Red King's forces, it is up to his twin sister Sarasa to lead their people in his name, or all will be lost.

Sarasa has achieved victory over the Red King in Kyushu and the Blue King in Seiran, gaining many allies along the way. While an attempt to rescue "Tatara's" mother ended in failure and left Sarasa potentially blind, the Red King's recklessness inspired a coup. Sarasa headed to Okinawa to heal her eyes; Shuri went to flee his betrayers. Reunited there, they became involved in halting a plot to kill the President and draw Okinawa into war with Japan. Their experiences on the prosperous, democratic island have inspired Sarasa and caused Shuri to reconsider his philosophy.

Starting anew, Shuri is bound for the island of Shikoku to seek supporters, accompanied by two allies from Okinawa.

Upon Sarasa's return, she confesses the truth of her gender to her closest comrades. She is shocked but accepting that Ageha has brought the pregnant Princess Senju, who once tried to kill "Tatara," to the rebels' flagship for safety. The reunion is short lived, for Hayato's ship returns without him, bearing a gruesome and dire warning from the people of Kazuno with whom he was to initiate contact...

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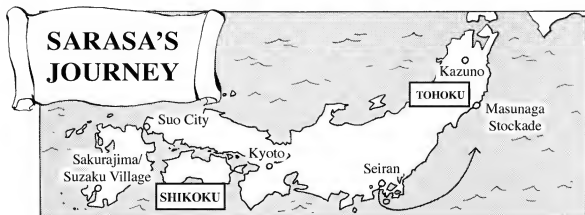
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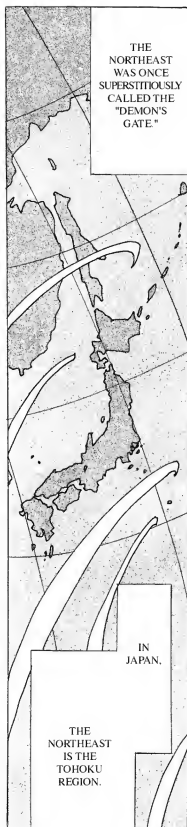
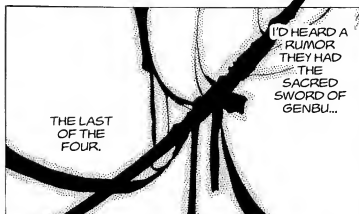
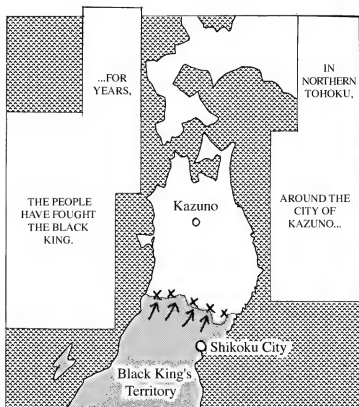
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SILVER TALE 2: CAPTIVE









SORRY, MR. BEAR.



THEY
EITHER
WENT
WHERE THEY
WERE
FORBIDDEN...

OR SAW
SOMETHING
THEY
SHOULDN'T
HAVE.

I'M
AFRAID
HAYATO
AND
SHOTA...



NAILS
DRIVEN
THROUGH
PAPERS IN
HUMAN
SHAPE.

HANGING
A FLAG
UPSIDE
DOWN.



A
CURSE!?



THESE
ARE THE
TOOLS
OF A
CURSE.

STARVING
AN
ANIMAL,

AND
THEN
SACRI-
FICING
IT.



IT
LOOKS
AS IF...

...A CURSE
HAS BEEN
CAST.



ALL THIS IS
PUNISHMENT
FOR
VIOLATING A
TABOO.

THEY USE
FLOWERS,
TOO.

AND A
WARNING
TO US...

LOOK.

SEE
THESE?

CHRYSA-
THEMUM
PETALS ARE
SCATTERED
EVERYWHERE.

FOR HAVING
SENT THEM.



EVEN IN 30
YEARS!

NOTHING'S
CHANGED
THERE--

HAVE YOU
BEEN
THERE
BEFORE,
KAKU?

YOU'RE
FAMILIAR
WITH THEIR
CUSTOMS.



THE
CROWS WILL
PROTECT US!

EVIL
SPIRITS
BE
GONE!

HERE'S A
CHARM TO
WARD OFF
EVIL!

→ THE GOD OF KUMANO'S SERVANTS ARE CROWS.



UM...

...NOT
REALLY.



HA!

HMM-
MMM-
MM...



SOME
THINGS YOU
CAN'T LEARN
WITHOUT
PLUNGING
IN.

PAT
PAT

I DIDN'T
EVEN TRY
TO LEARN
WHO THESE
PEOPLE
WERE.

IT WAS
MY
MISTAKE.

I DIDN'T
TAKE IT
SERIOUSLY
ENOUGH.



I'M
HERE
FOR YOU!

DON'T
WORRY,
TATARA!

HOW...
REAS-
SURING...

GHAHA
HA

DUNNO IF IT'LL
WORK ON A CURSE
THOUGH.



HE'S WEAK...

NOT BAD.

BUT HAS NO OBVIOUS WOUNDS.

HOW'S SHOTA?



TAKE CARE OF HIM, NAGI.

GOOD.

HE'LL BE ABLE TO TALK ONCE HE GETS SOME REST.



HISHA JUST GOT BACK FROM SCOUTING OUT WEST!

HE HAS NEWS ABOUT THE RED KING!



BMP BMP

TATARA!

CHA-CHA?

TATARA, WE HAVE A SITUATION!



BMP

OH, HAYATO...



THE RED
KING IS
ALIVE!

HE'S
NOT
DEAD!?

BUT THIS
HAS
GIVEN IT
NEW LIFE!

SUO CITY
HAD SLID
INTO
DESPAIR--

HE TURNED
UP IN
SHIKOKU!

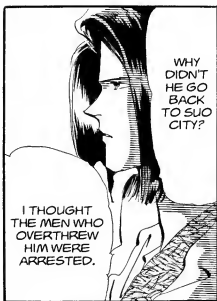
SO...

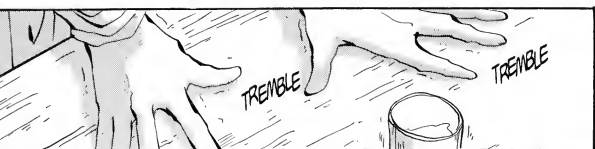
WHY
IS HE IN
SHIKOKU?

HOW
LUCKY
IS HE!?

THE
RED
KING...?

HE'S TRYING
TO GET THE
LOCAL
MAGNATES
ON HIS SIDE!

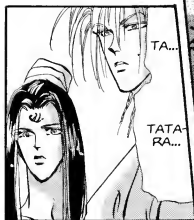






HE'S
ALIVE!

HE'S
MINE!





AND
KYUSHU
WILL
FALL!

HE'LL
ATTACK
SUZAKU IN
SAKURA-
JIMA...

OR
MAYBE...

WHAT
WILL HE
DO
NEXT?

IF THE
RED
KING
TAKES
SHIKOKU,

MAYBE.

...ATTACK
SUO CITY?

ABOUT
WHAT?

UM...

TATA-
RA...

ARE
YOU
SURE?

WELL...



THEN WE'LL
TURN BACK TO
KYUSHU AND
FORTIFY
OURSELVES
AGAINST THE
RED KING!

**FULL
SPEED
TO
TOHOKU!**

WE'LL
FORM AN
ALLIANCE
WITH
KAZUNO!



MY
SHOWDOWN
WITH THE
RED KING...

ZZSH

I CAN
FEEL
IT!

...IS
CLOSE AT
HAND!



RATION-
ALLY.

BUT THIS
ISN'T
RATIONAL.



ZZSH

SHE
HATES
HIM
SO
MUCH...

WHAT?

ISN'T IT
BETTER
IF HE'S
DEAD!?

...THAT
SHE'S
GLAD
HE'S
ALIVE.



ZZSH
KREK
ZZSH

THAT
WAS
SOME
CALL TO
ARMS.

SHE WAS
POSITIVELY
GLOWING.



I HOPE
HE
DOESN'T
GET
CAUGHT
IN THE
MIDDLE
OF IT...

THE RED
KING IS IN
SHIKOKU.

SHURI SAID
HE WAS
GOING TO
SHIKOKU,
TOO.



I'LL TRY
NOT TO
THINK
ABOUT IT.

FOR
NOW...



WE'RE
COUNTING
ON YOU,
TATARA!

WE'LL BRING
THE FOUR
SACRED
SWORDS
TOGETHER,
AND WE'LL
FORGE AN
ALLIANCE!



SO THE
SHIP
TURNS
NORTH...

WE'VE
ASKED TO
TALK WITH
KAZUNO--

BUT WE
WEREN'T
EVEN
ALLOWED TO
MEET THEIR
LEADER.

...AND THE
TEMPERATURE
DROPS.



REPORTING,
LORD
ASAGI.

MURATAKE
HEAD
OF THE
FOUR
VIRTUES--



MY
LEGS
ARE
COLD!

BRR!

I'D
BETTER
DRESS
WARMLY.



ARE YOU
GOING
ASHORE
WITH
TATARA,
SIR?



I DO
NOT
KNOW.

IT IS
IMPOSSIBLE
TO STEP
FOOT WITHIN
THEIR LANDS.

EVEN
FOR
US...



WHAT'S
IT LIKE
IN
KAZU-
NO?

WHAT
HAPPENED
TO
HAYATO?



AS
USUAL IN
TOHOKU...

THERE ARE
SKIRMISHES
BETWEEN THE
BLACK KING
AND KAZUNO.



I SEE WHY THE
BLACK KING
HAS NEVER
BEEN ABLE TO
CONQUER IT...

THOUGH HE
DEVOTES
ALL HIS
POWER TO
THE TASK.



ONLY
SOMEONE
WHO HAS
BEEN
THERE...

CAN TRULY
UNDER-
STAND
HOW EERIE
IT IS.



YET YOU
NEARLY
DIED
THERE...

...SO
THEY
SAY.



DON'T
TREAT ME
LIKE AN
INVALID.

LORD
ASAGI,
KYOTO IS
NEVER AS
COLD AS
THIS.

PLEASE.
STAY
AWAY.



IT IS
WINTER
THERE
ALREADY.

TOO
COLD
FOR
YOUR
HEALTH.



IS
THIS AN
EXCUSE
FOR YOUR
INCOMPE-
TENCE?

I
MUST WARN
YOU THAT I
CANNOT
PROTECT
YOU THERE!



IT'S
COLD...

IT'S
SO COLD.

MOMMY...

I WAS ONLY
A CHILD.

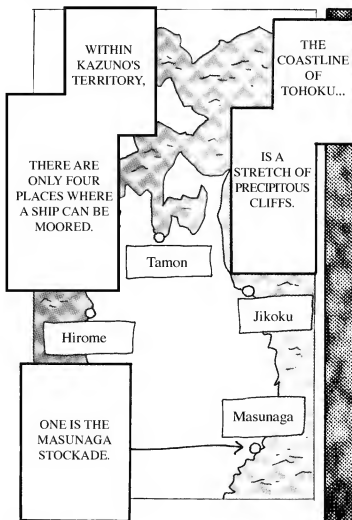
DONT
REMINDE
ME OF
SUCH AN
UN-
PLEASANT
TIME.





TELL
ME.

WHO
AM
I?



WITHIN
KAZUNO'S
TERRITORY,

THE
COASTLINE
OF
TOHOKU...

THERE ARE
ONLY FOUR
PLACES WHERE
A SHIP CAN BE
MOORED.

IS A
STRETCH OF
PRECIPITOUS
CLIFFS.

Tamon

Jikoku

Hirome

ONE IS THE
MASUNAGA
STOCKADE.

Masunaga

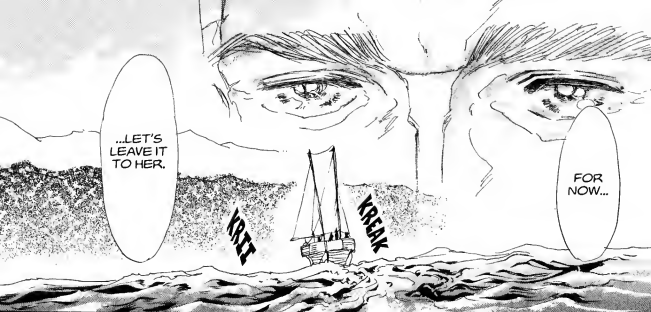


THE
BLUE
KING...
LORD
ASAGI.



GOOD.
REMEM-
BER
THAT.





...LET'S
LEAVE IT
TO HER.

FOR
NOW...

KREK

KREK



HN0000...

MASUNAGA
STOCKADE

ZLSH...

KREK



THREE
OF
YOU MAY
PASS.



KREK

MY NAME
IS
TATARA.

TWO OF
MY
PEOPLE
WERE
HERE
BEFORE.

I'D LIKE
TO SEE
YOUR
LEADER.



HALT!

WHAT
DO YOU
WANT!?

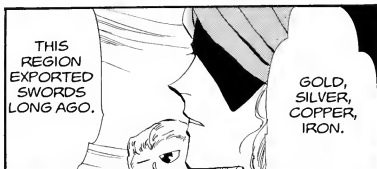




YOUR
PRESENCE IS
REASSURING,
AGEHA.

FLATTERY
WON'T GET
YOU
ANYWHERE,
TATARA.

WILL
THERE
BE
BOOBY
TRAPS?



THIS
REGION
EXPORTED
SWORDS
LONG AGO.

GOLD,
SILVER,
COPPER,
IRON.



SO
DAMN
COLD.

I WONDER
IF HAYATO
AND
SHOTA
PASSED
THROUGH
HERE,
TOO...?



HUH!?



THAT'S
IT?
WE'RE
DONE?

LIGHT
UP
AHEAD.



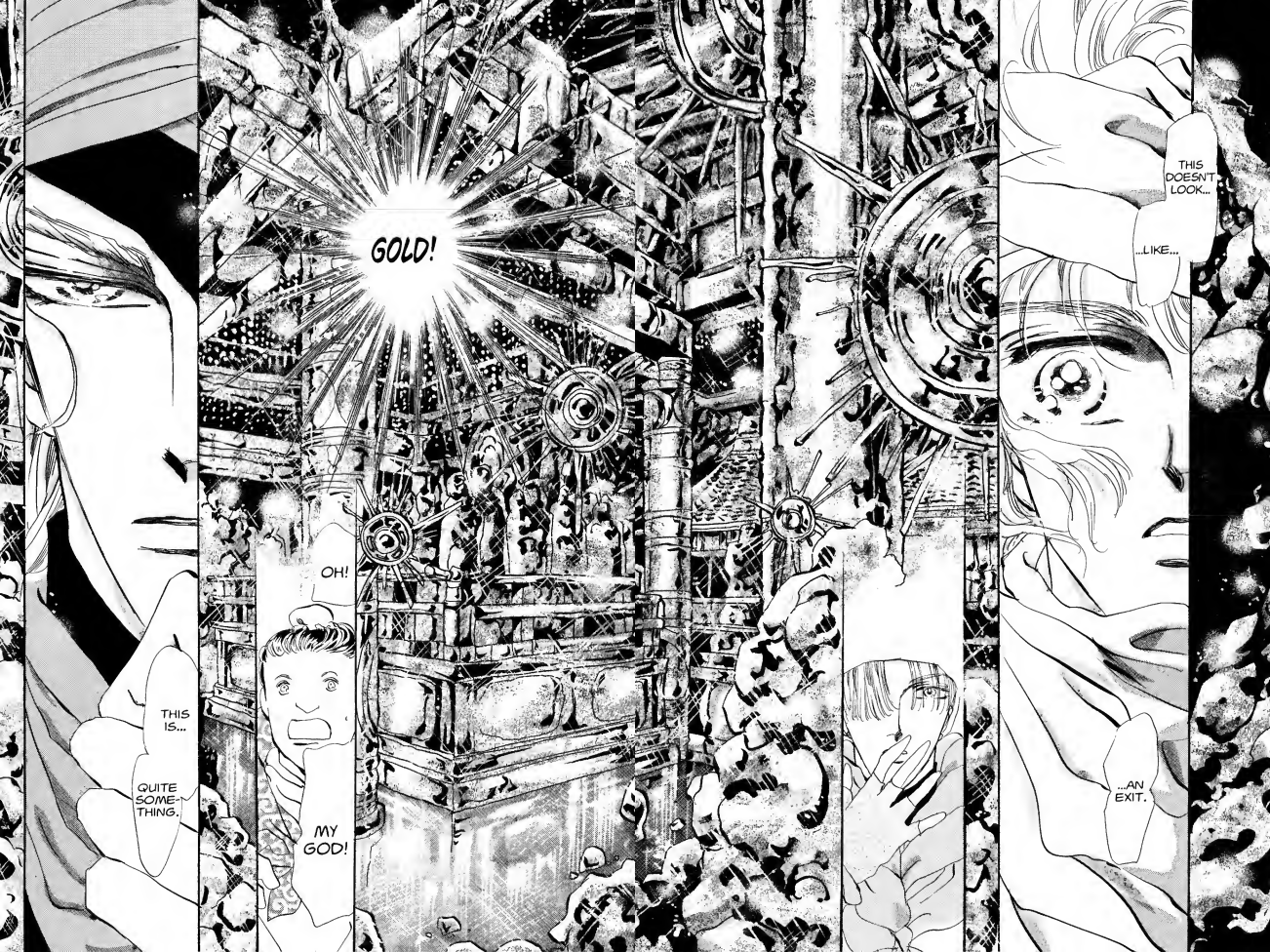
AGEHA?

WHAT
KIND OF
TUNNEL IS
THIS?

I
DON'T
LIKE
CAVES.

TOO
MANY
BAD
MEMORIES.

PROBABLY
AN OLD
MINE
SHAFT.



GOLD!

OH!

MY GOD!

THIS IS...

QUITE SOME-THING.

THIS DOESN'T LOOK...

LIKE...

...AN EXIT.



SOLID
GOLD!

IT'S ALL
GOLD!



WAAAAHA

EVERYWHERE!

LOOK AT
THIS!

WHOLE
PILES OF
IT!



SO BEAUTI-
FUL...

WOW!

FEH.

YOU CAN
ALWAYS
TELL A
HICK BY HIS
TASTES.

I
HATE
HICKS.



NOT
ONLY
IS IT
ALL
GOLD...

TOO
BRIGHT!

NONE
OF IT'S
GOLD
PLATE.



BUT THEY'RE
LYING ON
THE FLOOR!
WHO'LL
NOTICE?

IT'S
BETTER
NOT TO
TOUCH
ANYTHING.

I'LL JUST
TAKE A
LITTLE
PIECE.

THE
DOOR
TO THE
PATHWAY--

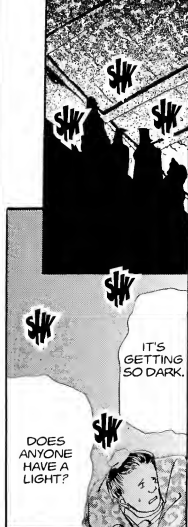
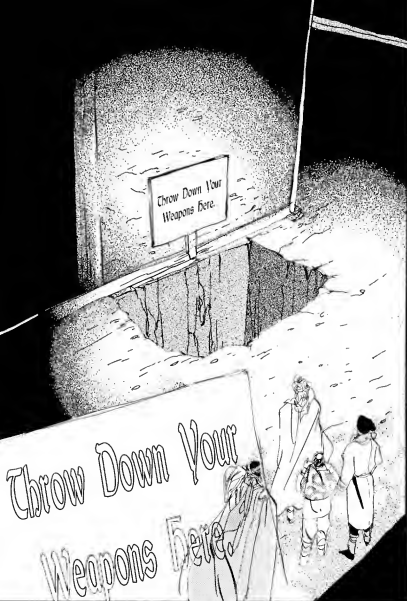
SHHHH

IT'S
CLOSING!

RUN!











NO...

LIONS!

...TO THROW
DOWN OUR
WEAPONS IN
THIS
SITUATION!?

THEY
EXPECT
US...



COME
ON.

DO THEY
THINK
WE'RE
IDIOTS?

I'LL TURN YOU
ALL INTO
SASHIMI.



AGEHA!

GIVE
ME
YOUR
SWORD!

ASAGI,
NO!

GOT
IT.

TATARA!

STOP!





KROOSH



NO!

IT'S
ON A
TROLLEY!

RATTLE
RATTLE

TM
TM
TM

A
BOULDER!?

IT'S
GOING
TO
CRUSH
US!

YAAA!
GET OUT
OF ITS
WAY!

IT'S
ROLLING
TOWARD
US!



WAIT!

NOBODY
MOVE!



NING



TATARA?



BM
WE DIDN'T
COME TO
FIGHT!

WE DIDN'T
COME TO SPY
ON YOU!

TM
TM
WE
DIDN'T
COME TO
STEAL
YOUR
GOLD!

HEAR
ME!

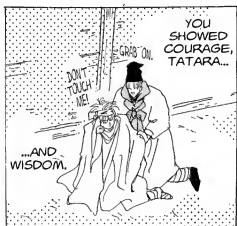
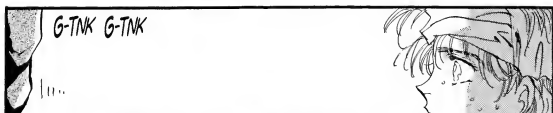
TO
TRUST
US!

BUT
I ASK
YOU--

WE
WON'T
MOVE!

WE'LL
TRUST
YOU!





KLONG



THIS IS THE
FIRST TIME
I'VE SEEN
ANYONE...

PASS
THROUGH
HERE UN-
SCATHED.

KR!!!



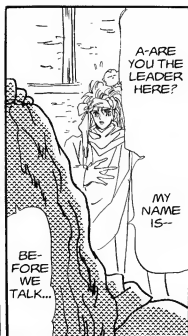
...IS
MASUNAGA.

MY
NAME...

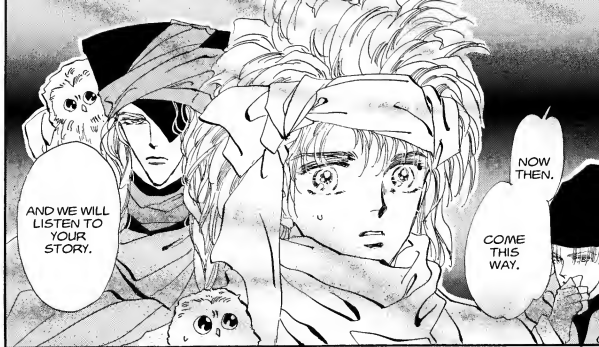


WELCOME.

A
MASK!









WE DO NOT
CONSIDER IT
TO BE A PART
OF JAPAN.

THIS
LAND OF
OURS...

MUST
WARN
YOU
FIRST.

WE HAVE NO
AMBITION
BEYOND
THAT.

WE'RE ONLY
FIGHTING
TO
PROTECT
OUR LAND.



WE DON'T FEAR
SHEDDING
BLOOD FOR
OUR OWN
COUNTRY.

WHETHER
OUR BLOOD
OR THAT OF
OTHERS.

HE'S SAYING
THEY HAVE
NO DESIRE
TO FORM AN
ALLIANCE
WITH
OUTSIDERS.



THEY
KNOW
WHAT
WE'RE
HERE
FOR.



THE PEACE
OF OUR
OWN LANDS.

OUR
NATIVE
SOIL.

MORE
IMPORT-
ANT...

THE
FREEDOM
TO LIVE
HERE.

THE
FUTURE OF
OUR
CHILDREN.



MORE
THAN
LIFE...

THAT IS
THE
COUNTRY
YOU HAVE
ENTERED.

...THAN
LIFE
ITSELF?



OUR
PEOPLE
UNDER-
STAND
THE GLORY
OF DYING...

...FOR
THEIR
COUN-
TRY.

BECAUSE
WHAT WE
PROTECT IS
MORE
IMPORTANT...

THAN
LIFE
ITSELF.





BUT
STILL...

I
HAVE TO
BELIEVE...

...THAT
LIFE IS
MORE
PRECIOUS.

..IN AN
AGE LIKE
THIS.

LIFE MUST
BE MORE
PRECIOUS...

I
CAN
SEE
THAT.

—MORE
IMPORTANT
THAN LIFE...

UNDERSTAND.

BUT...

TATARA,
DON'T
GET
EMOTIONAL.

BUT...

BECAUSE
WE LIVE IN
AN AGE LIKE
THIS...



AREN'T YOU TRYING TO DRAW US INTO BATTLE?

AND YOU CALL YOURSELF A REVOLUTION -ARY?



AREN'T YOU HERE TO ASK US TO SHED BLOOD FOR JAPAN?

YOU MAY LEAVE.

THIS TALK IS OVER.

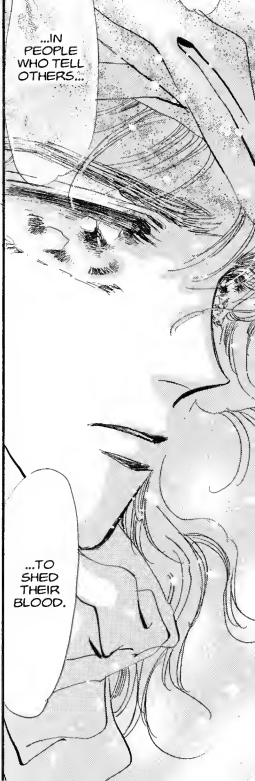


WE'LL GIVE YOU BACK YOUR WEAPONS AS YOU LEAVE THE COUNTRY.

CHING

...AND NOW THIS.

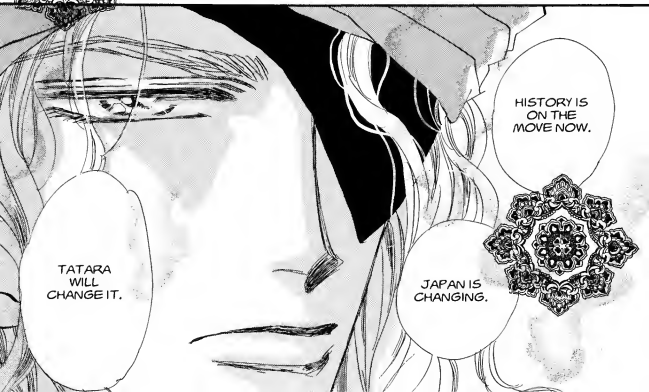
ONE MINUTE I THINK SHE'S MATURED...

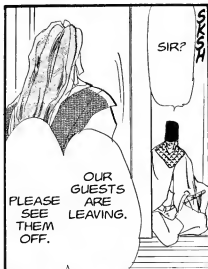
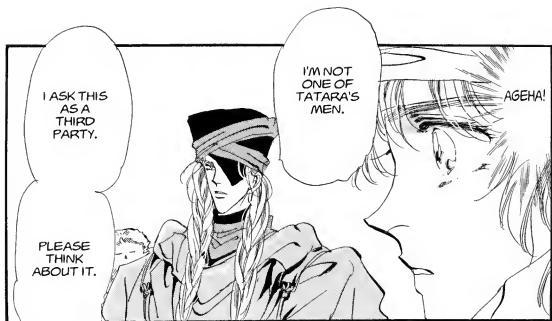


...TO SHED THEIR BLOOD.

...IN PEOPLE WHO TELL OTHERS...

I CAN'T PUT MY FAITH...





VERTICAL
TAM-TAM TIME ①

AGEHA'S PROFILE:



He won't tell me his birthday, so it's unknown. I think he's a Gemini. He was born in the desert and has type O blood.

He's muscular and tall (much taller than Shuri). So it's amazing how he can transform into a woman...

He always wears blue.

TAMU.



IT LOOKS
LIKE IT'S
ABOUT TO
RAIN.



I
DO
NOT.



TA-
TARA...

WILL
YOU LET
US
SPEND
THE
NIGHT?

WE TURN
MOST PEOPLE
AWAY AT THE
ENTRANCE
AND DON'T
EVEN LET
THEM
THROUGH THE
TUNNEL.



...THAT YOU
WON'T STEP
FOOT
OUTSIDE
YOUR
ROOM.

IF YOU
DON'T
MIND
PROMIS-
ING US...



I CAN'T
GUARANTEE
THE SAFETY
OF YOUR
LIVES.

DO NOT
GO
OUTSIDE.



AGEHA.

YOU'VE NEVER
SPOKEN UP
FOR ME LIKE
THAT BEFORE.

NOT IN MY
PRESENCE.



ALL
RIGHT.

SSS

AT
MID-
NIGHT...



...I
THOUGHT
YOU'D ASK
THAT.



WHILE
I'M
AT
IT...

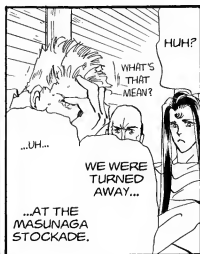
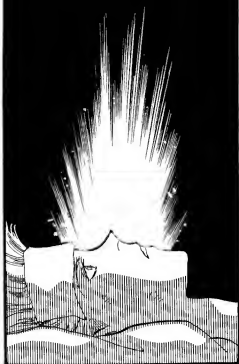
WILL
YOU
COME
WITH
ME?

I WANT TO
GO LOOK
FOR
HAYATO.



NO, I
HAVEN'T.

I'D NEVER
REALIZED
HOW BADLY
YOU NEED MY
HELP
BEFORE.





IT
WAS...

TATARA!

NO!

AND
THEN...

IT
WAS...



...IS A
NEST
OF
MONSTERS!

THAT
PLACE...

DON'T
BREAK
THEIR
PROMISE!

DON'T
WALK
OUTSIDE
AT NIGHT!

SILVER TALE 3: EXILE



THEY TOLD US
NOT TO GO
OUTSIDE...

THESE
PEOPLE
CAPTURED
HAYATO.

BUT IF THEY
WON'T TELL
US WHAT
HAPPENED...

WE'LL HAVE TO
GO HELP HIM
OURSELVES.





TINY TAM-TAM TIME ①

Hello! Thanks for all
your support!

WRITE ME!



The story has moved to the Tohoku region, so I went
on a short trip to Hiraizumi and Tono (cities in Iwate
prefecture).

It was a whirlwind tour, but really fun.

I ate a lot of dumplings! ♡

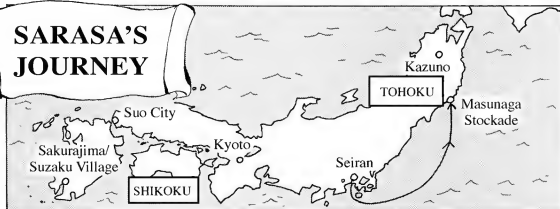
That was my first time in Tohoku.

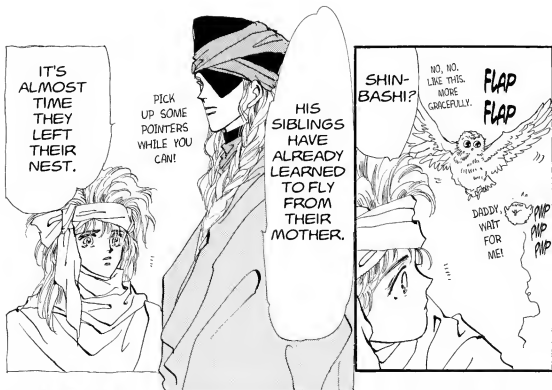
I'd like to go to lots of other places, too! ♡

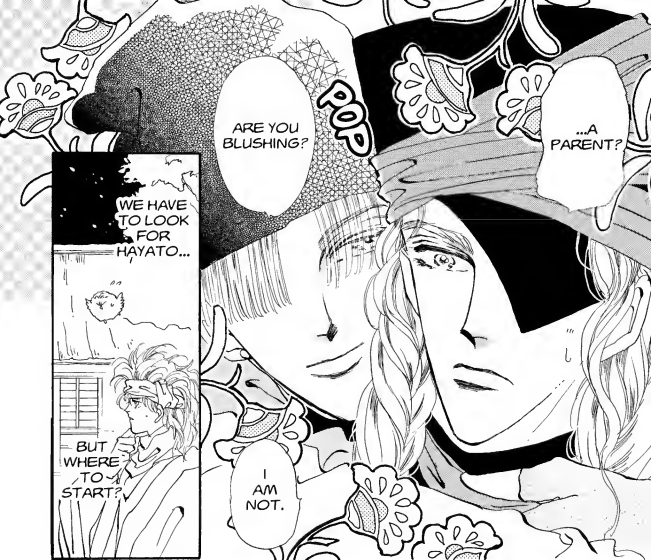
Is BASARA actually in its eleventh
volume? Stay tuned! Take care! ♡ ♡ ♡

TAMU.

SARASA'S JOURNEY











BRP

IT SURE IS
A QUIET
PLACE.



SIGH

SO
MANY
HOUS-
ES,
YET...



NO
LIGHTS.

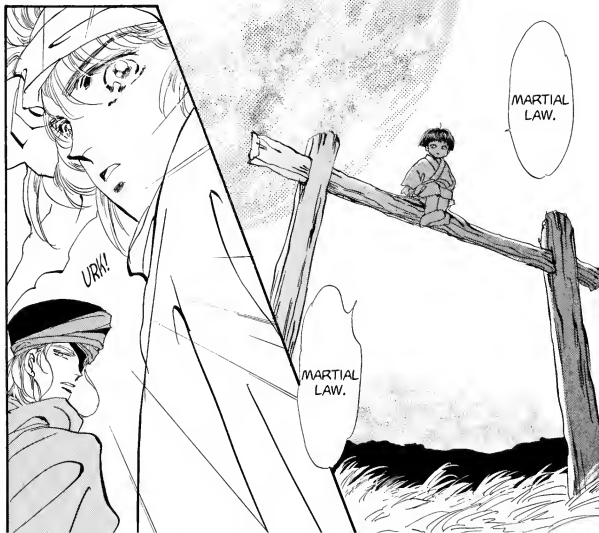
DON'T
THEY HAVE
ANY BARS
HERE?

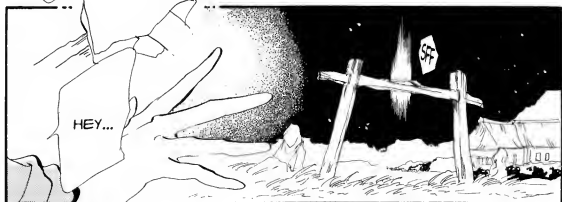
THEY'RE
NOT
CHACHA.

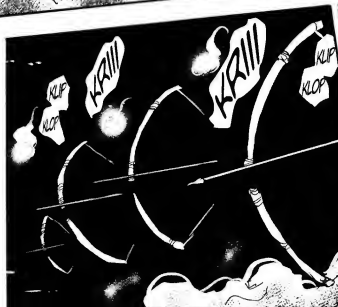
NO
SIGNS
OF LIFE.

GUESS
NOT.
HEH.















WHAT THE
HELL ARE
THESE!?



...IT
HAS
A
FACE.



TATA-
RA...

LOOK
AT
THIS
ROCK.



WATCH
WHERE
YOU
STEP.

HFF

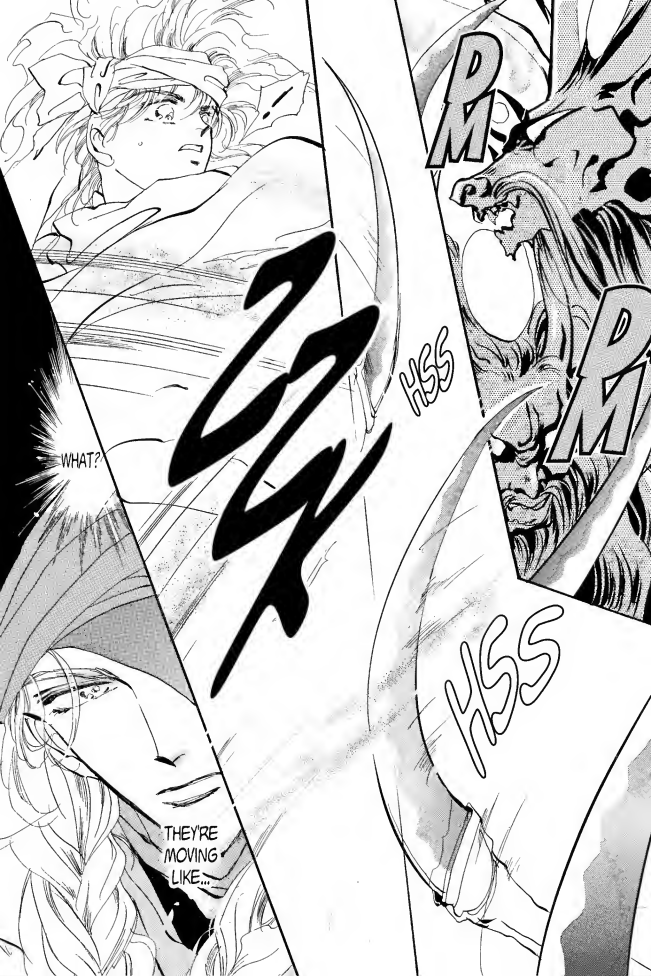
IT'S
ALL
ROCKS.

SLIPPERY,
TOO.



THESE
AREN'T
ROCKS!





WHAT?

THEY'RE
MOVING
LIKE...



SHOTA!

WAAAAH!

BOOM

OH!

THEY
WERE
MONSTERS!

A
GIANT!

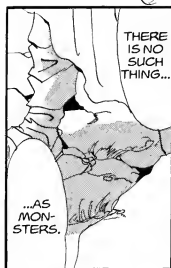
DM
DM

WHAT
WILL
YOU
DO!?

TA-
TARA!

TATARA!

...A
GIANT!?





NO DARK
THICKETS
OR RIVER-
BANKS...

NO PLACE
WHERE
MONSTERS
COULD
DWELL.

NOTHING.

IN
THE
DESERT,

THERE
ARE NO
SHADOWS
TO GIVE
SHELTER.



I'VE
NEVER
HAD TO.

I NEVER
LEARNED
TO FEAR
EERIE
THINGS
THAT
LUCK...
...IN THE
DARK.



THERE'S
NOTHING
AS
SCARY...

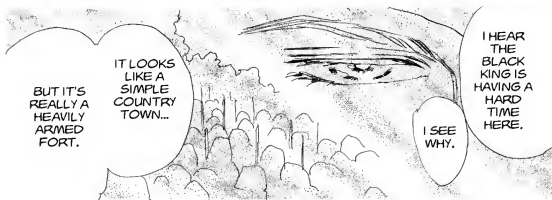
...AS PEOPLE
WEARING
THOSE RED
CLOAKS.



THE ONLY
THINGS
TO FEAR
IN THE
DESERT...

...ARE
PEOPLE.











PEOPLE
WHO
BREAK
PROMIS-
ES...

YOU
PROMISED
NOT TO
LEAVE THE
ROOM.

...GO TO
THE COLD
PLACE.

YOUR
FRIEND IS
WAITING
FOR YOU
THERE.







...A SHIP.

I'M HUNGRY.
I SHOULD CATCH
SOMETHING.



IT'S
BEFORE
DAWN...

WHAT'S
GOING
ON?



HIJIRI!

SEE
MY
FLARE!

HYUUUU



OH,
WELL...

I KNEW
YOU
SHOULDN'T
TAKEN
ME
ALONG.

I STILL
HAVE A
CARD
TO
PLAY.



I'VE GOT
GOOD EYES.



NO TIME
TO GO
BACK TO
THE
MOTHER
SHIP.

UH-OH.

VERTICAL
TAM-TAM TIME ②

AGEHA'S DAY:

DAY

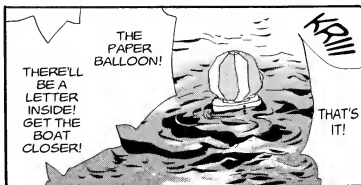
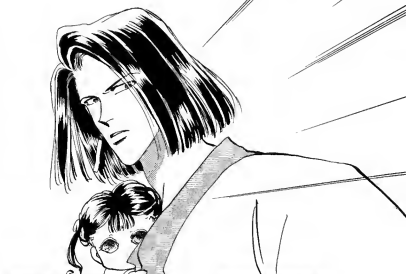
I'M A
WANDERER.

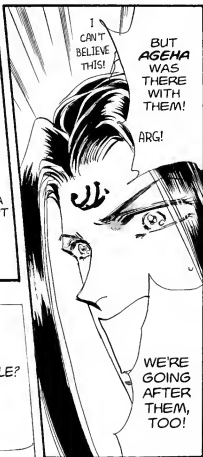
He's always traveling.

Everything about him is a mystery.
We don't know what he's thinking,
what makes him happy, what he
wants to do, or whether he just
likes to walk.

He seems to have friends
everywhere.

TAKU.





DAMN
IT ALL!

HIJIRI, LOOKIT
WHAT I GOT!

HE COULD
SURVIVE
ALONE
LONGER
THAN ANY
OF US--

WHETHER
HE'S IN THE
WOODS OR
AT SEA.

HE
ACTS
LIKE A
FOOL...

BUT
HE'S
NOT.

I
KNOW
HIM.

IF HE SAID
HE'D
RESCUE
THEM,

THEN HE
WILL.

TATARA!

RETURN TO
SAKURA-
JIMA.

FORTIFY
OURSELVES
AGAINST
THE RED
KING.

HIJIRI'S
RIGHT.

WE
SHOULD
DO AS
TATARA
SAID.

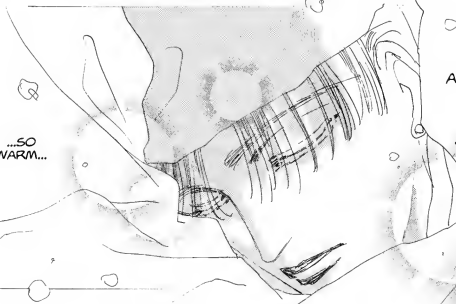


I HATE
BEING
COLD...

IT'S
COLD...



WHO'S
THERE?



...SO
WARM...

AH...



ARE YOU ALL
RIGHT,
ASAGI?

BANK



WE WERE
AFRAID YOU'D
HIT
SOMETHING
WHEN YOU
FELL.

YOU
WOULDN'T
WAKE
UP.

SNIP

TATA-
RA...



TOK KATOK

KREAK

JANG

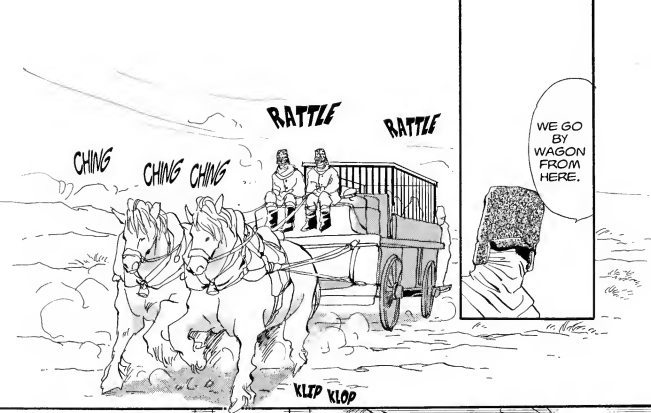
WHERE
ARE
WE?

I
THINK
THAT WE
DOCKED
A WHILE
AGO.

HAUL
THEM
OUT.

...AND IN A
CAGE.

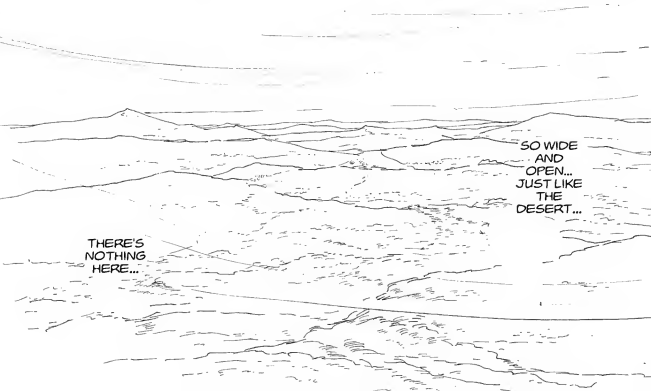
LOOKS
LIKE WE'RE
ABOARD A
SHIP.



WHERE
ARE THEY
TAKING
US?

BOOP

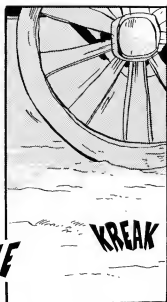
WHERE
ARE
WE?

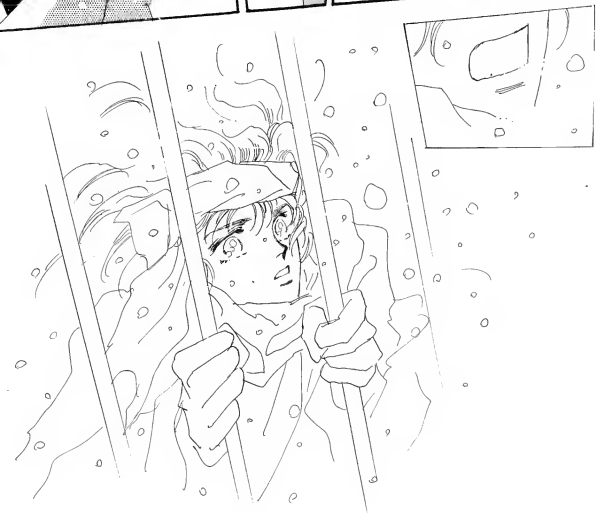


THERE'S
NOTHING
HERE...

SO WIDE
AND
OPEN...
JUST LIKE
THE
DESERT...







SO
THIS IS
SNOW...

SNOW...

HE'S MY
SHINBASHI!

DON'T HIDE
HIM AWAY!

WHAT
IS
THIS!?

NO!

WHAT'S
HAPPENING!?

SHINBASHI!

STOP
FALLING!

THERE'S SO
MUCH
SNOW...

SHINBASHI!!

HELP HIM!

AGEHA!

AGEHA!

DO
SOME-
THING!

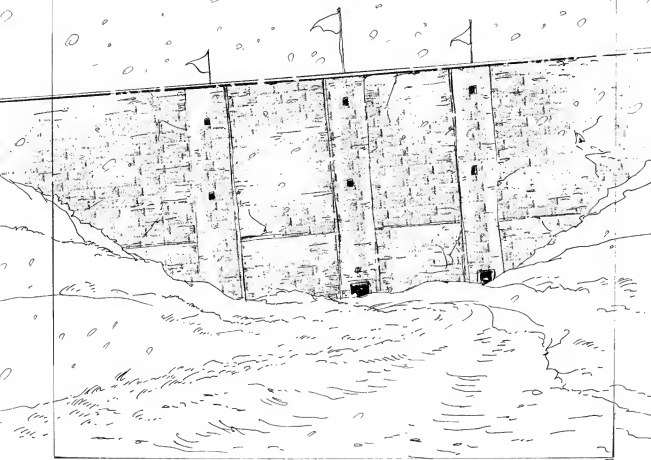
YOU
HAVE TO
HELP
HIM!

UP YOU
THREE.

KLIP
KLOP

WE'RE
HERE.

THIS IS
ABASHIRI
PRISON.





SILVER TALE 4:
EDGE OF DEATH



IN
ANCIENT
GREECE...

OWLS
WERE THE
FAMILIARS
OF ATHENA...

...THE
GODDESS
OF
WISDOM
AND
BATTLE.



TINY TAM-TAM TIME ③ Special Bonus!

Master Nagi's Prophecy!

Q: Is Sarasa the woman
for whom Ageha will
give his life?

My answer is this...

SHE IS, AND
SHE ISN'T.

You will find out
when BASARA ends.
I think...

TAMU

SARASA'S JOURNEY

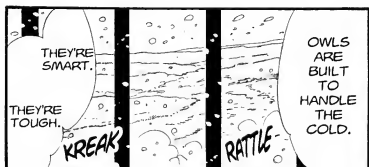
Abashiri Prison

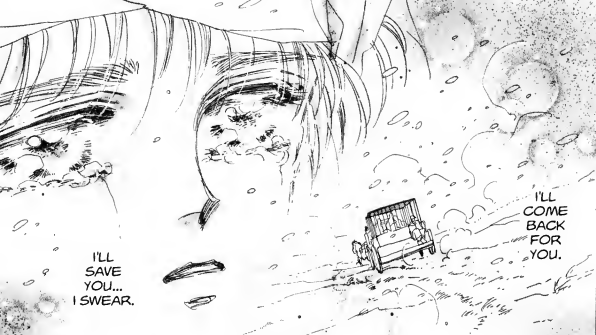
HOKKAIDO

TOHOKU

Masunaga Stockade

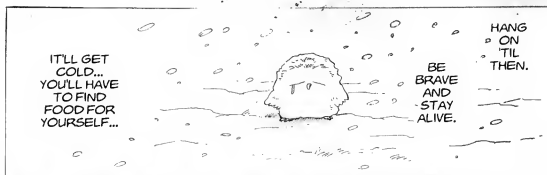






I'LL
SAVE
YOU...
I SWEAR.

I'LL
COME
BACK
FOR
YOU.



IT'LL GET
COLD...
YOU'LL HAVE
TO FIND
FOOD FOR
YOURSELF...

BE
BRAVE
AND
STAY
ALIVE.

HANG
ON
TIL
THEN.



EXACTLY.



WE
WON'T
STAY
THERE
LONG.

I'LL
WANT
TO
COME
BACK...

AS
SOON
AS I
CAN.



IS THIS
THE FIRST
TIME
YOU'VE
SEEN
SNOW,
TATARA?

HOKKAIDO...

OWLS ARE,
THE GODS
OF THE
FOREST
IN THIS
LAND OF
SNOW.

...I
DON'T
CARE.

I HATE
THIS.

HOKKAIDO...



WHAT
WILL IT
BE--
DEMONS
OR
SERPENTS
?

WHAT-
EVER
IT MAY
BE...

WE MUST
PREPARE
FOR THE
WORST.



RATTLE
KREAK

ARE WE
CRIMINALS
NOW?

OF ALL
THE
HORRIBLE
PLACES
TO END
UP.

WHY
ARE WE
TREATED
LIKE
THIS?

2006

HOKKAIDO.

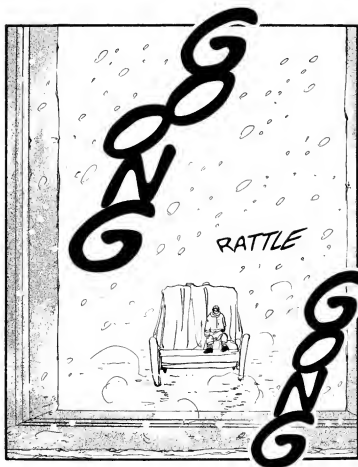
2006

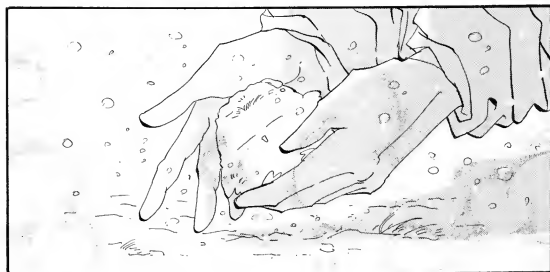
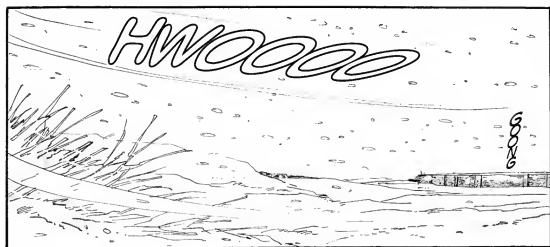
THE
FAR
NORTH.

ABASHIRI
PRISON.

RATTLE

2006







GR!!
GR!!
GR!!
GR!!

KREAK

RATTLE

WHY
DID
THEY
COVER
THE
CAGE?

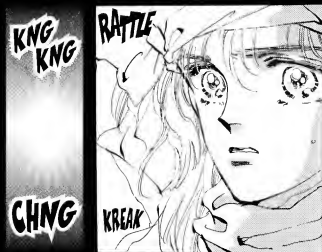
KREAK

SO
WE
CAN'T
SEE
WHAT
IT
LOOKS
LIKE
INSIDE.

TONK

KLONG

GR!!



ASH

YOUR
JOURNEY
ENDS
HERE.

DO
COME OUT,
NEWCOMERS.

WELCOME
TO
ABASHIRI
PRISON.

THE
KINGDOM
OF THE
NORTHERN
SEAS.





...WHOA!



WAIT
FOR
ME...

SHIN-
BASHI
...

WAIT
FOR
ME...



I CAN'T
SEE.
IT'S
ALL
WHITE.

LIKE
SULFUR...

WHAT'S
BELOW
US?

BETTER THAN
COLD,
THOUGH

SO
HOT...

AND
THAT
STENCH...



LET'S
FIND
ANOTHER
PATH.

AND
DON'T
FALL!



THE
DRAW-
BRIDGE
IS UP.

WE
CAN'T
MAKE
THE
OTHER
SIDE.





RIGHT
INTO
THAT
HOT
SPRING.

I CAN
DROP
HIM,
YOU
KNOW.



TATARA...

IT'S A
HOT
SPRING
!?



THIS IS
THE
SOURCE.

SO
IT'S
BOILING.

YEAH,
BUT ...

HEH







IDiot!

STOP!

TATARA!

IT
CAN'T
BE!



VIP WHO

DO YOU
WANT TO
DIE?

WELL?

ANSWER
ME!

DO
YOU?

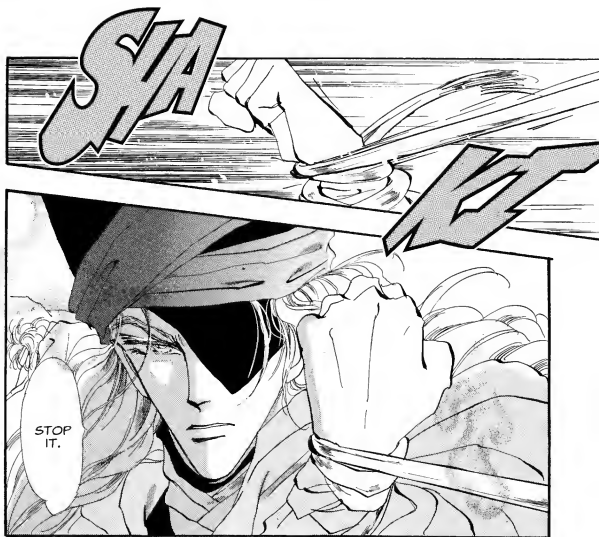
I'LL
KILL
YOU!

V
P

TATARA!

BUT
DEFYING
ME WAS.

TRYING
TO
PINION
ME
WASN'T
A BAD
IDEA.







OF OUR
ENEMIES!

WE'RE
IN THE
MIDST-

THAT'S
ALWAYS
THE SORT
THAT GETS
SENT
HERE.



YOU
MUST BE
INSURGENTS
AGAINST
THE ROYAL
FAMILY,
OR
SOMETHING.

PERHAPS
IT WAS A
MISTAKE...



YOU
STILL
HAVE TO
WORK
EVERYDAY.

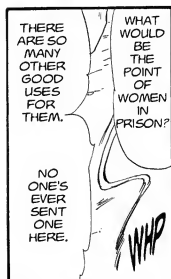
WELL,
THE
PRISONERS
HERE HAVE
NO NAMES.

WHETHER
YOU'RE
POWERFUL
OR JUST A
PUNK...

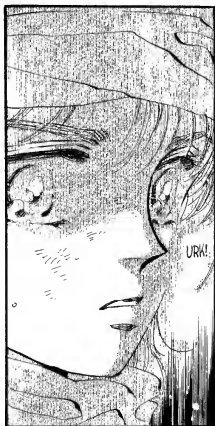
YOU'RE
ALL
THE
SAME.



...TO
CALL
HER
TATARA.









KICHO,
FLOWER
OF THE
DESERT...

CHING

...IS
ABOUT
TO BEGIN
HER STRIP
TEASE!

COME
ONE,
COME
ALL!

DON'T
TELL
ME
YOU
DON'T
LIKE
IT!

LOO
LOO
LOO!

ONE SHEEP
TRIPS.

ANOTHER SHEEP
TRIPS.

AND I TRIP
WITH THEM!

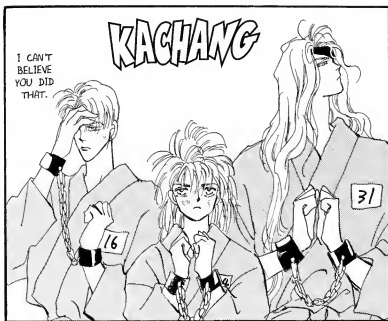
LOO LOO LOO!

JUST
A
PEEK!

I
USUALLY
DON'T
STRIP,
YOU
KNOW.

THIS LL
COST
YOU.

BRAVO.



NEWCOMERS
ARE
SHACKLED
HAND AND
FOOT
FOR A
WEEK.

...THIS
IS NO
LAUGHING
MATTER
FOR *YOU*,
EITHER.

YOU'LL
SOON
SEE...

WE
HAVE
QUITE
A FEW
TODAY.

HM.

EXCUSE
ME,
WARDEN.

WE
HAVE
ANOTHER
NEW
ONE.

AH'DA
BEEN SO
SKEERED
T' GO
IN BY
MAHSELF!

OH!

THANK
GAWD!

AH
DO
LOOK
FORWARD
T' GETTIN'
T'KNOW
Y'ALL!

AH'M
NUMBER
50.

PLEASE
BE
PATIENT.

ALL
RIGHT.
GO
DOWN
ONE
AT A
TIME.



YOU'LL
AWAKE
AT FOUR
IN THE
MORNING.

DON'T
WASTE
YOUR
ENERGY
GETTING
INTO
FIGHTS.

TAKE
CARE.



IT
CAN'T
BE!

...HUH
?

I
SMELL...

IT'S
A
WOMAN!

GA CH UNG



WHO
CARES?

A
WOMAN.

HENH
HENH

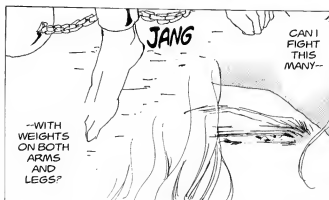
THEY'RE
SO
PRETTY.

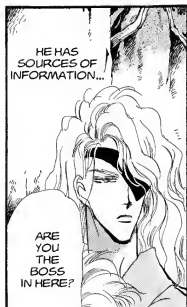
AND
I'M
SO
BORED!

BACK
OFF.
THEY'RE
JUST
KIDS.

I CAN
SMELL
HER!

HEE!
HEE!







IF YOU
PROMISE
NEVER TO
LAY A
FINGER
ON HIM...



ONE
I'LL
HAVE
TO
MAKE.

MY
BROTHER'S
JUST A
KID.



I'LL DO
WHATEVER
YOU WANT
ME TO
DO.

...YOU
CAN
COUNT
ON
ME.



AGEHA!?

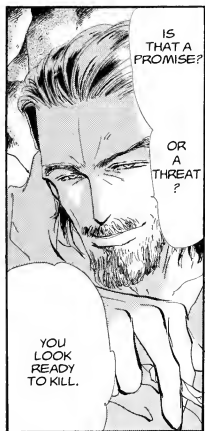


ONCE
A SLAVE,
NOW A
DANCER.

CLOSE
ENOUGH.



YOU
A
PROSTI-
TUTE?





AND
COVER
YOUR
EARS.

CLOSE
YOUR
EYES.



SUCH
IS MY
LIFE.

DON'T
FEEL
BAD.



JUST
DON'T
WORRY.

I SWEAR
I'LL
PROTECT
YOU.

NOW
IS
THE
TIME...

...FOR
YOU TO
GET
SERIOUS
ABOUT
PROTECTING
HIM,
TOO.

AT
LEAST
IF I'M
WITH
HIM...

I KNOW
I CAN
SERVE
HIM.

AGEHA
...

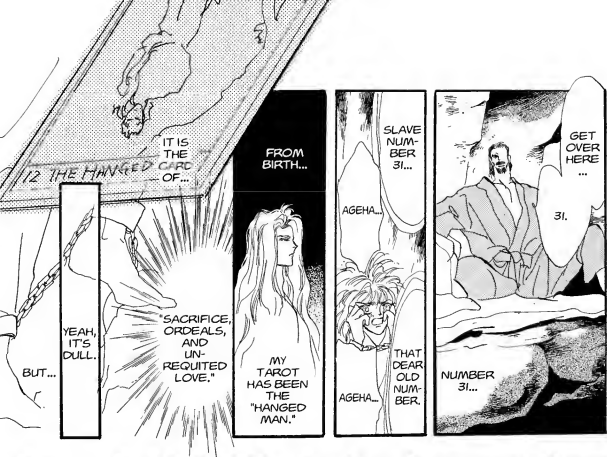
ASAGI.

KEEP
TATARA
CLOSE.

AS
FOR
ME...

I'M
GLAD...

THAT I
CAME
WITH
TATARA.





AGEHA!

MY
FATE
HAS
BEEN
LINKED
WITH
YOURS.

SINCE
I LOST
MY
EYE...

PLEASE...

I HAVE
TO SAVE
HIM.

SOMEHOW...

I HAVE
TO STOP
THIS.

AGEHA...

CAN'T
MOVE...

I CAN'T...

NN--

HELP
ME.

HELP
ME...

SHURI...

SHURI...



Silver Tale 5:
Canary



TINY TAM-TAM TIME ④

Master Nagi's Prophecy! 2

Q: When will Sarasa and Shuri learn each other's identities?

My answer is this...



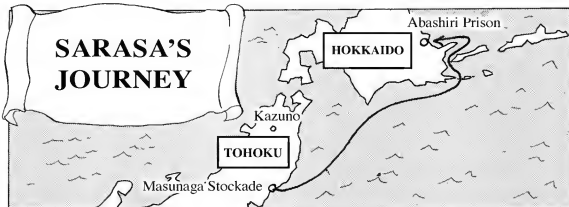
THE NEXT TIME THEY MEET MIGHT BE DICEY.

Even Nagi doesn't know about them. (I think...)

SO STAY TUNED!



SARASA'S JOURNEY



SHIKOKU
TOSA DISTRICT - CAPE RYUO

ABOUT
WHAT
WE WERE
DISCUSSING.

YUNA!

ZZZ



MR.
RED
KING?

HAVEN'T
YOU
EVER
LOVED
SOMEONE...

OH,
YEAH...

WELL?

WHY
DO
YOU
HESI-
TATE?

I WAS SO
ARROGANT...



LOVE
AND
ALL
THAT.

HUH?



I WANT
HER
NEAR
ME.

AND I
WANT
TO MAKE
LOVE TO
HER.

I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
CONSTITUTES
LOVE...

BUT
I LIKE
SARASA
VERY
MUCH.



I WANT
WHAT
I WANT.

THAT'S
ALL.

IT'S
NOT
LIKE
I LIVE
MY LIFE
WRITING
POETRY.

IF
THAT'S
NOT
"LOVE,"

THEN
WHO
CARES
WHAT IT
MEANS!?



...AND
NOT
JUST
FOR YOUR
OWN?

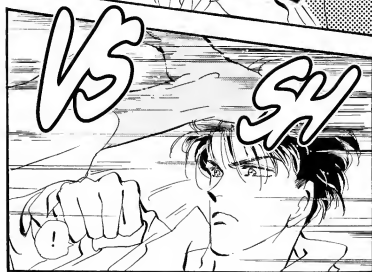
DO YOU
WISH
FOR
SARASA'S
HAPPINESS
...



I WANT
TO SMILE,
TOO,
SOMEHOW.

WHEN
SHE'S
SMILING...

HELL,
YES.





HOW
CAN
YOU
BE SO
RUDE!?

DO I
HAVE
TO BE
KICKED
BY YOU,
TOO!?

APOLOGIZE
TO HER!



YOU STAND
SILENT
WHILE AN
OLD MAN
WHO MISSED
HIS DATE WITH
DEATH--

↑
PRESIDENT
ASATO.

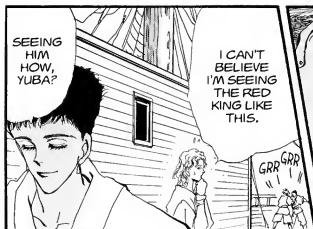
--STEALS
THE
WOMAN
YOU
LOVE.



FEH.

I DON'T
NEED A
LECTURE
ON
MANNERS.

YOU
CAN'T
EVEN
SAY WHAT
YOU
WANT.



SEEING
HIM
HOW,
YUBA?

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
I'M SEEING
THE RED
KING LIKE
THIS.

GRR GRR



THERE
ARE
CIRCUM-
STANCES
YOU DON'T
UNDERSTAND!

OH?

C
H
U
M
P
!

THE ETERNAL
EXCUSE OF A
COWARD.
IF YOU WANTED
HER, YOU SHOULD
TAKE HER BY
FORCE.



AND HE
SEEMS
TO BE
ENJOYING
THE
QUARREL.

HE'S
BEING
INSULTED
AND
KICKED...

BUT
HE
HASN'T
DRAWN
HIS
SWORD.



YUBA!
WHAT ARE
YOU DOING
THERE!?

OH,
SORRY
SIR!



PROBABLY
HAD NO
FRIENDS,
EITHER.

HMM...
SO
THEY'RE
FRIENDS...
?

HE
USED
TO
BE A
FOOL.

HUP!





HE'S THE
KINGPIN
OF THE
WHOLE
AREA
AROUND
SHIKOKU.

KTA
KTA

WHO'S
TENMA
?

KTA
KTA
KTA
KTA

YEAH?

BUT
THIS WAS
YOUR
TERRITORY,
RIGHT?
SO HE WAS YOUR
SUBJECT.



ARE
YOU
SURE
YOU WANT
TO MEET
HIM!?

KTA KTA KTA

I TOOK
SHIKOKU
BY
FORCE.

HE
PROBABLY
DOESN'T
THINK WELL
OF ME.



A
MESSAGE
FROM
LORD
TENMA
OF
TOSA.

HE
WANTS
YOU TO
COME TO
HIS
MANOR.



BUT
I WANT
HIM--

HE
CAN
BE
PROB-
LEMATIC.

AND
HIS
MILITARY
GENIUS!

HE
ONLY
DOES
WHAT
HE
WANTS.

HE
KEPT
REFUSING
MY CALLS
TO BE MY
STRATEGIST
SO HE
COULD PLAY
SHOGI AT
HOME.



WELCOME
TO MY
MODEST
HOME.

WELL,
WELL.

YOU
SEEM
IN GOOD
HEALTH,
RED
KING.

CALL
ME
"TIGER
KING
OF THE
DESERT."

IT'S
BEEN A
WHILE,
TENMA.

I DON'T
USE
THAT
NAME
ANYMORE.

OR
JUST
MAKE
IT "TIGER."





HRF

OHO.

AND WOULD A TIGER...

...BE ABLE TO BEAT MY LOYAL TOSAMARU?



THAT'S ALL

I WAS BORN IN THE YEAR OF THE TIGER.



...REALLY?

WHY A TIGER?



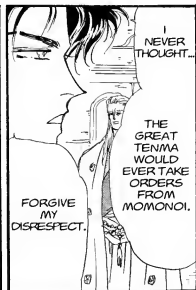
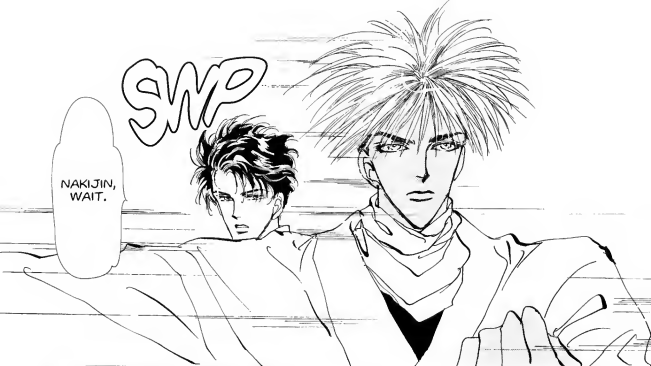
UP

UP

YOU SEE, I'VE BEEN ORDERED...

BY LORD MOMONOI OF SUO CITY...

TO CAPTURE THE RED KING.





AGAINST
THE
KINGDOM
OF
JAPAN?

DON'T
YOU
WANT
TO PLAY
A GAME
OF
SHOGI...



...HAS
CHANGED.

THE
RED
KING...



HE'S NOT
IMPLORING
MY HELP.

HE'S NOT
DESPERATE
FROM BEING
EXILED.

BUT
THERE'S NO
IMPATIENCE
EITHER.

IF HE
CAME IN
SWAGGERING
LIKE THE
RED KING
OF OLD.

I WAS
WONDERING
WHAT I'D
DO...

O-RYU...

HE
COMES
BEARING
LIGHT AND
WIND.

THE
BREEZE
I'M
FEELING...

MUST
BE THE
WIND OF
RE-
FORMATION.

TOSA
VALUES
FREEDOM
ABOVE
ALL
ELSE.

YES,
DEAR.

AREN'T
YOU EVEN
GOING TO
OFFER TEA
TO YOUR
GUESTS?



THANK
YOU.



FORGIVE
ME,
VISITOR.

I'LL
LISTEN
TO
WHAT
YOU
HAVE
TO
SAY.



BUT
SIRE...

STAND
DOWN.

IT'S
ALL
RIGHT.



NAKIJIN!

PHEW



SHFF

.....

I'M
COUNTING
ON YOU.

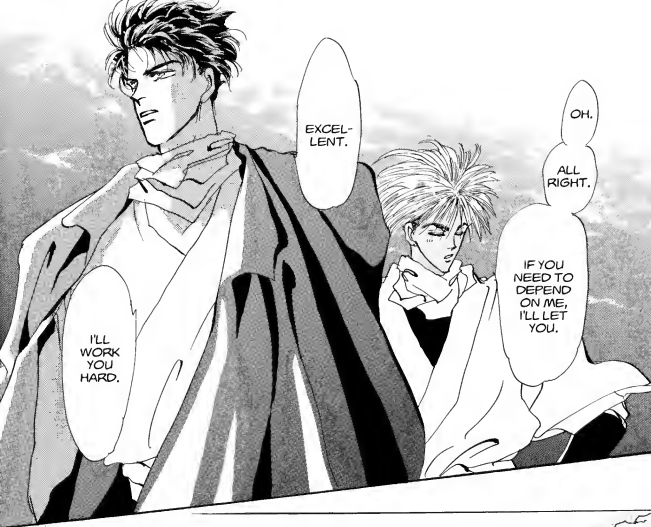
YOU'VE
GOT TO
GET
USED
TO
THIS.

...WHAT
...?



DON'T
LOOK SO
RELIEVED.

THEY'LL
TAKE
ADVANTAGE
OF ANY
WEAKNESS.



I'LL
WORK
YOU
HARD.

EXCEL-
LENT.

OH.
ALL
RIGHT.

IF YOU
NEED TO
DEPEND
ON ME,
I'LL LET
YOU.



...I'LL
ENTER
SAKURAJIMA...
AND GET
TATARA!

ONCE I
BUILD
STRENGTH
IN SHIKOKU...

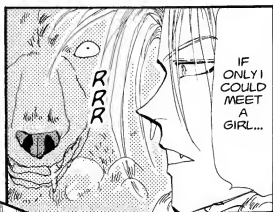
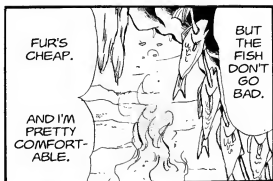


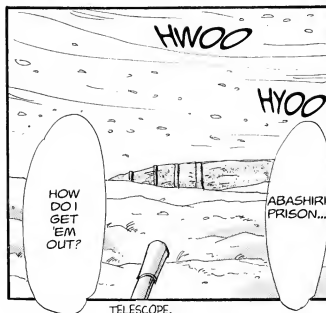
AH--



EESH!

CHOO!







YOU ALL RIGHT?

NNH...

OO! SHE'S PRETTY!

YOU MUST'VE BEEN HAMMERED BY THE STORM.



HUH?

SOME-ONE'S THERE.



I'M LOOKING FOR SOME-ONE...

THANK YOU...

MY NAME IS MURATAKE.

HFF HFF



EXCEPT...

IT WON'T COME FREE.

I WAS JUST GONNA HAVE MYSELF SOME BEAR STEW. JOIN ME?

GA HA HA

OH, WELL.

OH. SHE IS A HE.

I'M SORRY, MR. BEAR.



USE-
FUL?!



I COULD
HAVE.

BUT
YOU
SEEM
USEFUL.

I
GLAD
THAT'S
OVER
WITH.

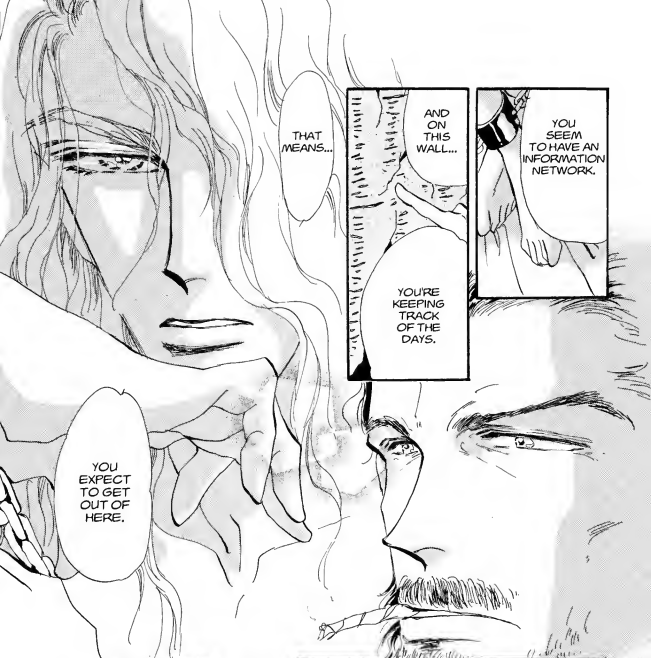
I WAS
NERVOUS
THE
WHOLE
TIME...

WONDER-
ING
IF YOU'D
BREAK
MY
NECK.



YOU'RE
TOO
MUSCULAR...

TO
BE AN
ORDINARY
DANCER.



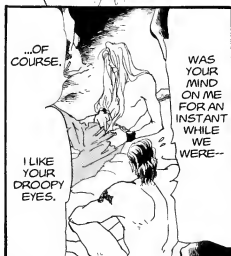
THAT
MEANS...

AND
ON
THIS WALL...

YOU
SEEM
TO HAVE AN
INFORMATION
NETWORK.

YOU'RE
KEEPING
TRACK OF
THE DAYS.

YOU
EXPECT
TO GET
OUT OF
HERE.



...OF
COURSE.

I LIKE
YOUR
DROOPY
EYES.

WAS
YOUR MIND
ON ME FOR AN
INSTANT
WHILE
WE WERE--



WHO
ARE
YOU
REALLY?

"A
DAGGER
BEHIND
A
SMILING
MASK."

.....

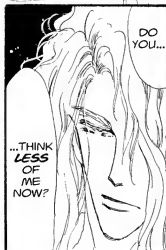
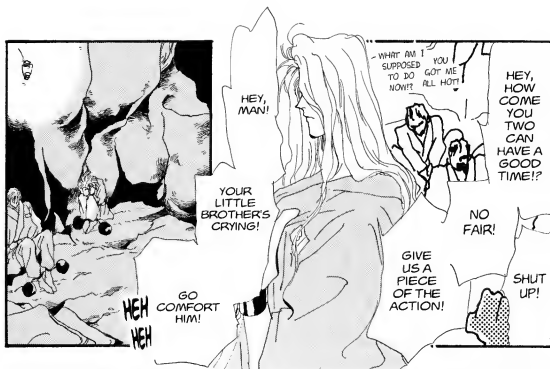


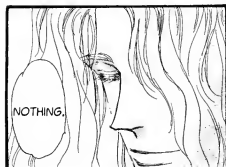
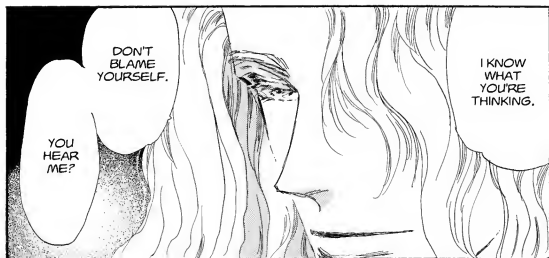
HE LIKED GIRLS.
AND SO DO I.



HE'S DEAD.









IN
THE
DESERT...

THE
FIRST
TIME
I SAW
YOU...

.....
THE
FIRST
TIME
WE
MET...

I FELT
IT.

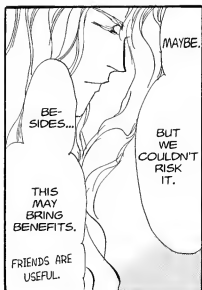
I KNEW
YOU
WERE
THE
CHILD
OF
DESTINY.

DON'T
MAKE
ME
LOSE
HOPE.

THAT'S
ALL I
WANT.

PROMISE
ME.

AND I
WASN'T
WRONG.





HE
DOESN'T
EVEN
LOVE
HIM!

HE
DOES
NOT!



THE
TIME
YOU
PINNED
ME
DOWN--

I
HATED
IT SO
MUCH!



ASAGI...

TATA-
RA.

MAYBE
AGEHA
LIKES
THIS
KIND OF
THING.



I DON'T
KNOW
WHAT
YOU'RE
IRRITATED
ABOUT.

WHAT
HAVE I
COME TO
WHEN
ASAGI
CALLS
ME FOUL?



ENOUGH.

IDIOTS.

YOU'RE
JUST
MAKING
ME FEEL
WORSE.

I CARED
TOO MUCH
ABOUT
MY OWN
SURVIVAL...



BUT I
COULDN'T
STOP HIM
FROM
DOING
THIS.



THIS
ISN'T
A BIG
DEAL.



I
WASN'T...

...OH.

BEING
CONSID-
ERATE.

I'M...
I'M
SORRY...

GOT
IT?

HAYATO!



CRYING ABOUT
IT JUST MEANS
I'M PITIFUL.

SIGH!

ALL
OF
YOU...

HAVE
THEY
BROUGHT
A NEW
KID CALLED
HAYATO
IN HERE?

SHIRASU!

TELL
ME.



...IS RUN
BY "WATER
DEER."
I'M SURE
YOU'VE MET
HIM
ALREADY.

HALL
A...

IT'S LIKE
AN ANT
NEST...
ONE
GREAT
MAZE.

AS
YOU
PROBAB-
LY
KNOW,

THE
ENTIRE
PRISON'S
UNDER-
GROUND.

"EARTH
BEAR"
RUNS
HALL C.

"FIRE FOX"
RUNS
HALL B.

HE'S
THE
ONE...
!?

... "WIND
OWL" ...

HE'S
THE
SON
OF THE
LOCAL
KING.

THE
ONE IN
CHARGE
OF THE
WHOLE
PLACE...

IS A
PUNK
CALLED
"WIND
OWL."



THE
RED
KING'S
COUSIN!

I SEE.

NO
WONDER
HE LOOKS
LIKE THE
RED
KING.

SHIN-
BASHI!

HE
DOESN'T
DESERVE
TO BE
CALLED
"OWL."

WELL,
YOU
KNOW...
HE'S
SCARY.

AND
WHEN
HE
DOES
GET
MAD?

GOOD
NIGHT.

I DON'T
KNOW.

HE'S
NICE
TO US
AS
LONG
AS WE
DON'T
MAKE
HIM
MAD.

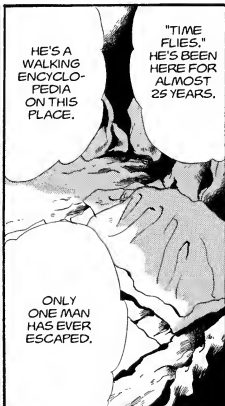
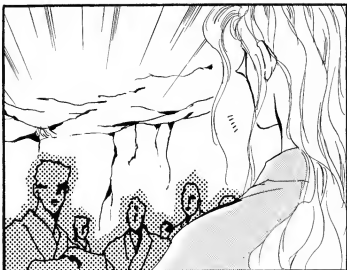
SHF

"WATER
DEER"
IS THE
LESSER
OF THE
EVILS.

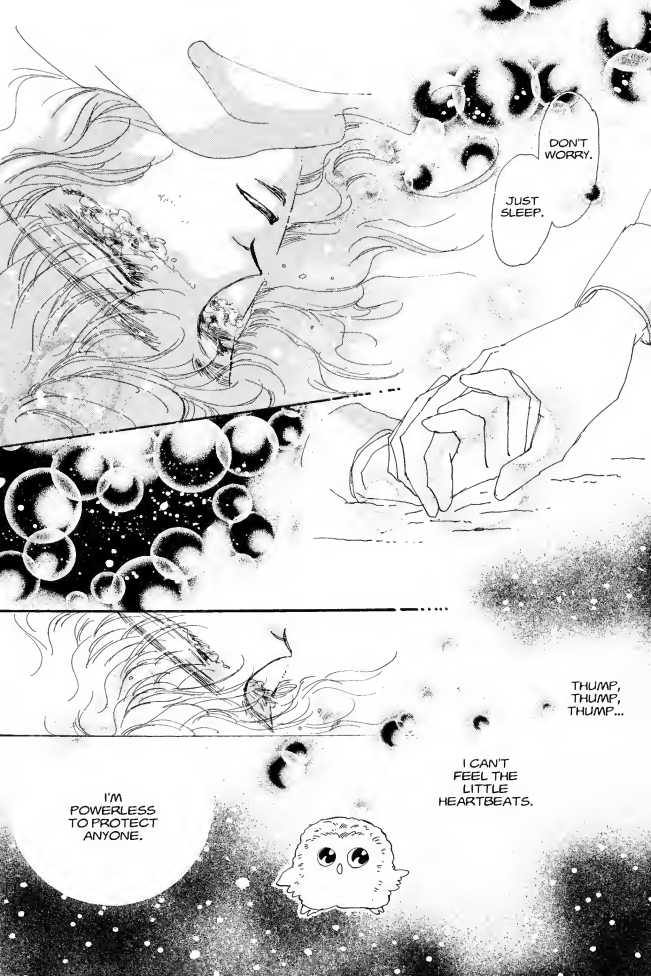
THEY
ARE
COUSINS,
AFTER
ALL.

HOW
CAN WE
GET
OUT OF
HERE?

AND...







DON'T
WORRY.

JUST
SLEEP.

THUMP,
THUMP,
THUMP...

I'M
POWERLESS
TO PROTECT
ANYONE.

I CAN'T
FEEL THE
LITTLE
HEARTBEATS.



KAKU...
CHACHA...

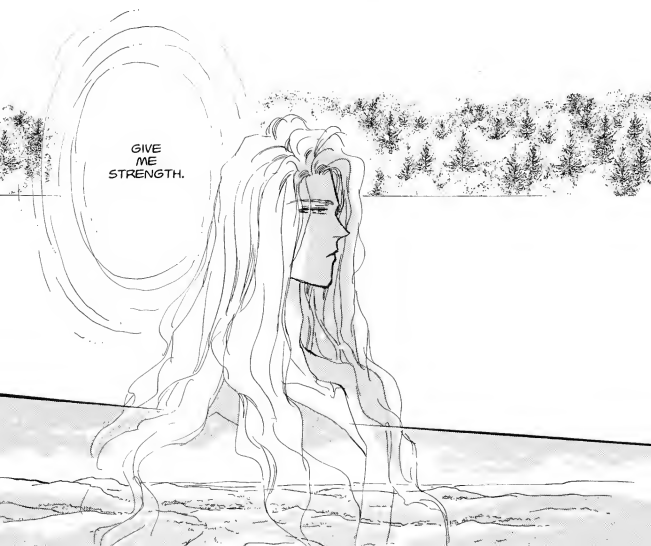
TATARA...
NAGI...



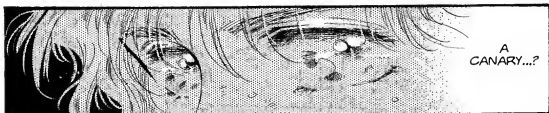
GIVE ME
STRENGTH...

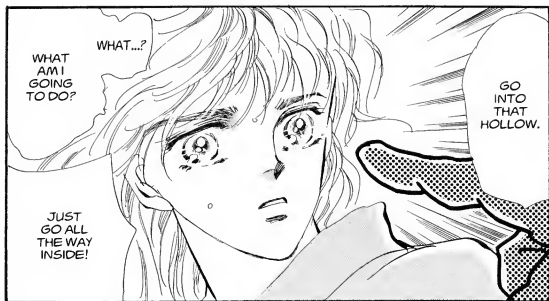
SHURI...

GIVE
ME
STRENGTH.









AGEHA'S DAY:

NIGHT

I'M STRAIGHT!



He's not gay. He just has a little "gei"-sha in him.

He looks so good being abused-- now I'm getting lots of letters begging me not to beat him up so much.

I'm sorry!..



IT'S A SACRIFICE.

"ONE LIFE FOR THE GOOD OF THE MANY."

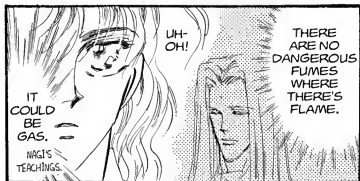
IF THE BIRD DIED...

THEY KNEW THERE WERE TOXIC GASSES.



WHEN DO I TURN BACK?

HOW FAR DO I GO?



IT COULD BE GAS.

NAGI'S TEACHINGS.

UH-OH!

THERE ARE NO DANGEROUS FUMES WHERE THERE'S FLAME.



HUH...?





UNH...

WHO'S
THERE!?



IT'S...

...NOT
ASAGI
AGAIN,
IS IT...?

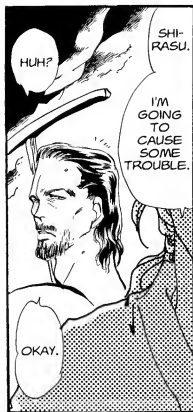
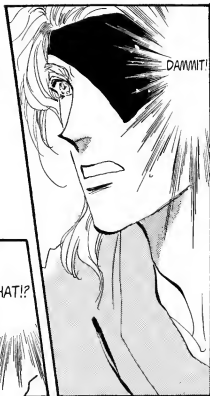
RRG...!

NO
GOOD.

HE'S
NOT
COMING
BACK.

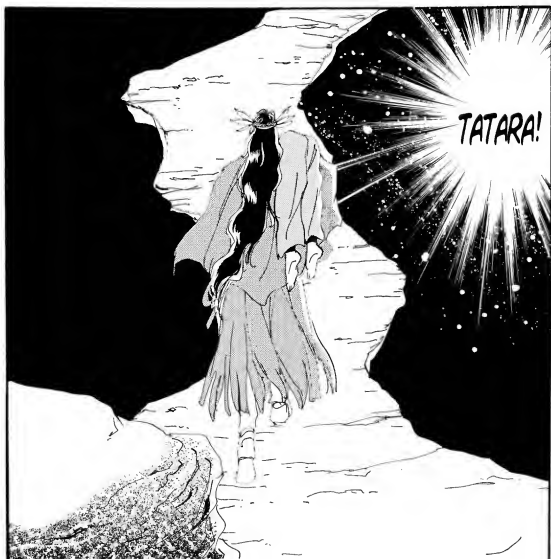
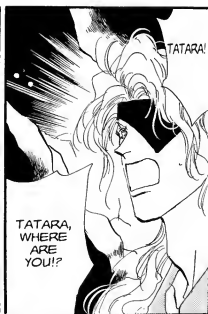
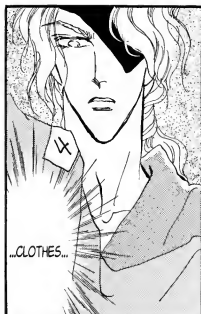
THERE
MUST'VE
BEEN
GAS.

ALL
RIGHT.
CLOSE
THIS UP
AND
CONTINUE
YOUR
WORK!



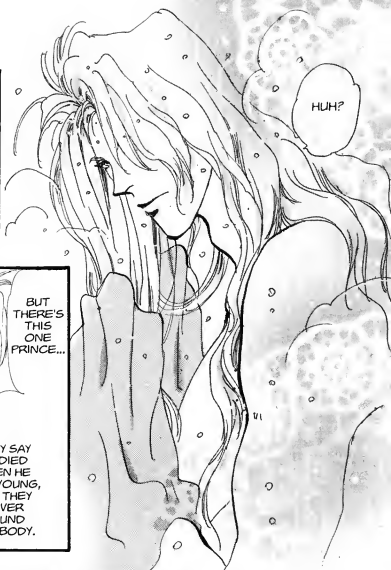
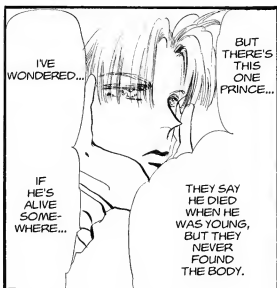
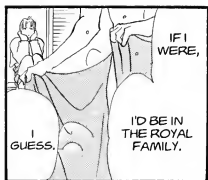


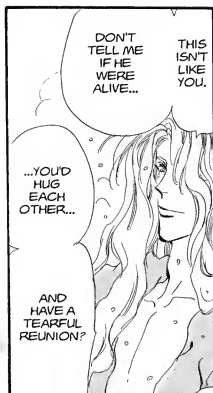
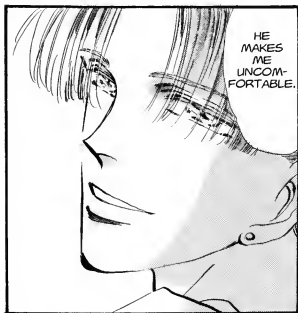


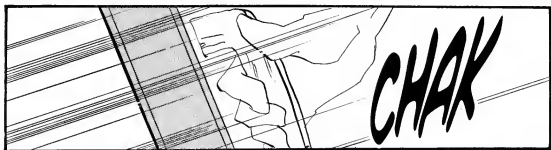
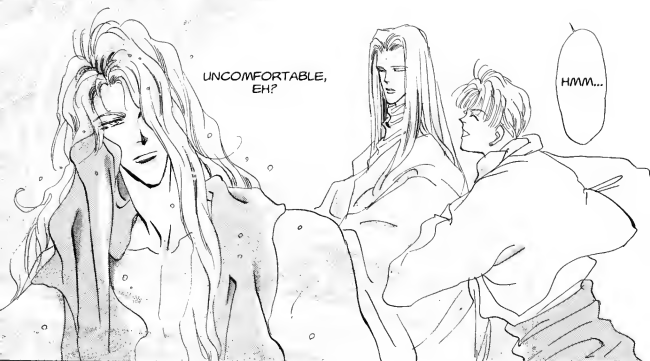


BONUS:
A BRIEF RECESS













....YOU
DIDN'T
TREAT
ME WITH
DISDAIN.

EVEN
WHEN I
REVEALED
THAT
I USED
TO BE A
SLAVE...

AND ONCE
ON THIS
SHIP,
YOU
SEEMED
HAPPY.

...EVEN
WHEN
MINGLING
WITH THE
COMMONERS.

I...

I DON'T
KNOW
IF THAT'S
THE
KIND OF
COUNTRY
SHIDO
WANTED.

BUT...

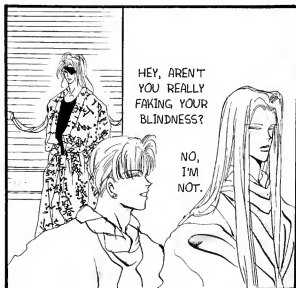
THERE
SHOULD
BE NO KING,
PRINCESS,
COMMONER,
OR SLAVE
IN THIS
AGE.

THERE
WILL BE A
TIME WHEN
EVERYONE
CAN LIVE
AS EQUALS,
IN PEACE.



GOOD
NIGHT.

TAKE
CARE
OF
YOUR-
SELF.



HEY, AREN'T
YOU REALLY
FAKING YOUR
BLINDNESS?

NO,
I'M
NOT.



I KNOW
SHIDO'S
CHILD...

...WILL
UNDERSTAND.



Recommendations

If you enjoyed *Basara*, please try these other graphic novels:

FROM FAR AWAY

This series from the top of Japanese sales charts is the masterpiece of the renowned shojo artist Kyoko Hikawa. The tale of a girl blasted into another world, *From Far Away* has all the action and romance you might expect but with a whole lot of extra twists. For one thing, the heroine doesn't understand the language! She must learn to speak it while struggling to understand this new world and the mysterious young man who has become her protector. All the while, she is unaware of the dire destiny she is meant to fulfill.



Kanatastara © Kyoko Hikawa
1991/HAKUSENSHA, Inc.

WILD COM

From *Basara*'s creator, Yumi Tamura, comes a trio of intriguing short stories. *Wild Com*'s heroine has a secret power. Somehow she must overcome her denial and learn to embrace her abilities. "The Beasts of June" is a dark little tale of people so far on the fringe of society they're barely human. "The Eye of the Needle" is a thriller about a rising star struggling with fame and a stalker. Each piece offers a different flavor of drama and action to satisfy a diversity of tastes.



© 1999 Yumi Tamura/
Shogakukan, Inc.

RUROUNI KENSHIN

A historical fiction like no other, Nobuhiro Watsuki's *Rurouni Kenshin* is an action-packed tale of one man's struggle to atone for his past. After the bloody battles of the Bakumatsu, Japan achieved peace and prosperity in the Meiji Era. Yet what of those men who fought so fiercely for that peace? The vagabond samurai *Kenshin* has abandoned the ways of violence to embrace the peace of the present, yet his past seems intent on not letting him go. This is martial arts manga at its finest.



RUROUNI KENSHIN ©
1994 by NOBUHIRO
WATSUKI/SHUEISHA Inc.

Editor's comments

As in English, Japanese has words that sound the same but have different meanings. Aside from context, a difference can be determined if the word is written with kanji, because kanji are ideograms. That is, they express *ideas*, not specific sounds. Such is the case for *Basara*'s two Shikokus. The Shikoku Shuri's in is one of Japan's four main islands. Its kanji are "four" and "country." The Shikoku we've designated "Shikoku City" is located around modern-day Sendai. Its kanji mean "purple" and "black."

One of the legends the Kazunos use to scare their enemies is the trollish *kappa*. With greenish skin and concave, plate-like heads that hold a strength-giving water, *kappa* look like a cross between a turtle, a frog and a human. Their myths vary, but most involve *kappa* draining the blood or life force of large creatures, including humans, who stray near their freshwater lairs. They are also considered fond of cucumbers, hence the name "kappa-maki" for rolled cucumber sushi.

This is the second volume to mention legendary swordsman Benkei Musashibo (he supposedly piled up the "giant" rock). Perhaps Tamura is a fan...

To say *shogi* is like *Stratego* is to say chess is like checkers. While the basic concepts are similar, one is far more complicated. This classic Japanese board game requires great strategy, and *Tenma*'s fondness for it is a reflection of his tactical prowess.

Tenma's dog is wearing a *mawashi*, a garment worn by *rikishi* (a.k.a. sumo wrestlers) during the ritual *dohyo-iri* (ring entering ceremony) preceding a day of sumo matches. The twisting white rope that holds the *mawashi* is a *tsuna* strapped in the *unryu* style. This elaborate belt designates a *yokozuna* or grand champion, implying *Tenma* participates in Tosa's tradition of dog fighting. Suitably enough, the kanji on the *mawashi* say "yokozuna."

The kite on page 100 says, "Happy New Year," and Shuri and Sarasa are dressed up for the occasion. Kite flying is a customary Japanese New Years activity, though how you fly one in a ladies formal kimono, I don't know. In color, hers is green, of course!

—PD

